

## Discussion Group Input

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE CRITICAL ISSUES RELATED TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT PRIORITIZATION IN SACRAMENTO?

WHAT POLICIES ARE NEEDED AT THE CITYWIDE LEVEL TO ADDRESS CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT PRIORITIZATION ISSUES?

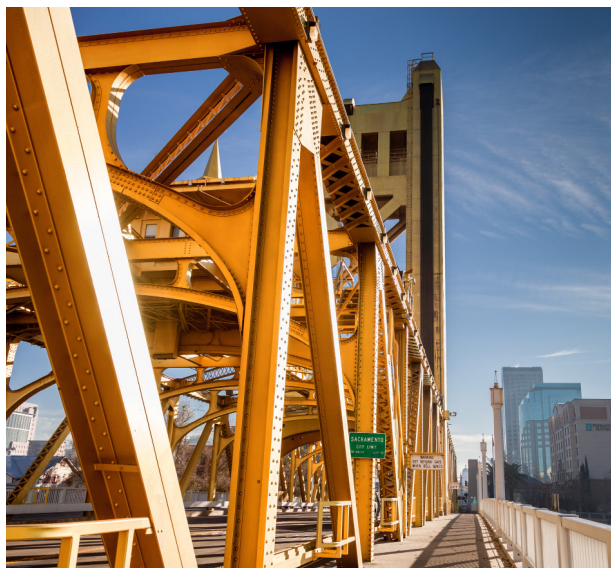
WHAT POLICIES ARE NEEDED AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC LOCAL ISSUES?



sacramento | 2040

### Environmental Justice Factbook: Civic Engagement and Investment Prioritization

December 2020



## Introduction

### What is Environmental Justice?

The City of Sacramento envisions a place where everyone can live a long, healthy, and opportunity-filled life, no matter who they are or where they come from. People’s health and opportunity are shaped by multiple factors, including their environment. Environment doesn’t just mean “nature”—it includes all components of our daily lives, including the *social* environment.

However, not all people has the chance to live their healthiest lives because of **environmental injustice**, which means that certain geographies and groups of people unfairly and disproportionately experience **higher exposure to pollution, greater health impacts, and less access** to things that keep people happy and healthy, like parks to play in, safe and affordable places to live, good jobs, schools, and stores that meet basic needs.

Environmental justice is a movement to come to terms with and remedy a history of unjust actions and outcomes. It is about taking concerted action to remedy the inequitable conditions that have led to economic and health disparities. Environmental justice addresses the long standing, disproportionate impact of environmental pollution on vulnerable populations as well as their lack of power in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws. Ultimately, **environmental justice means the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all groups so that everyone, regardless of their identities, has the chance to live in a healthy environment.**

### Environmental Justice in the 2040 General Plan

To achieve Sacramento’s vision of becoming a national model of sustainable, equitable growth and community development, we must address equity and environmental justice in our City’s comprehensive General Plan. Under California law (SB 1000), cities and other local jurisdictions must address environmental justice by developing policies for issues that affect *disadvantaged communities*, which are communities that experience high levels of pollution, socioeconomic stress, historic disinvestment, and negative health outcomes.

This factbook takes a deeper look at different environmental justice issues that impact both the entire city and the disadvantaged communities that are more vulnerable to their negative effects. Environmental justice is a complex, multifaceted topic: the factbooks provide a summary of some of the issue highlights but are not intended to be a comprehensive or definitive resource.

The factbooks use maps and infographics to examine a few aspects of each issue and to identify who is most affected. It then highlights existing City efforts and resources, and outlines potential policy concepts to include in the General Plan. This factbook uses data at the *census tract* level. A census tract is a geographic boundary that is usually either the smallest or most complete geographic scale for which data is available and has an average population of 4,000 residents, though it can range from 1,200 to 8,000 people. Census tract boundaries and neighborhood boundaries are not the same—while a neighborhood may fall in the boundaries of a single census tract, others may overlap multiple tracts. To help you understand the maps, some general neighborhood names are identified in comment boxes.

#### What is Equity?

“Regardless of one’s identities, equity is when all people have fair, just treatment, access to the opportunities necessary to satisfy their essential needs, advance their well-being and achieve their full potential, while identifying and eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.”

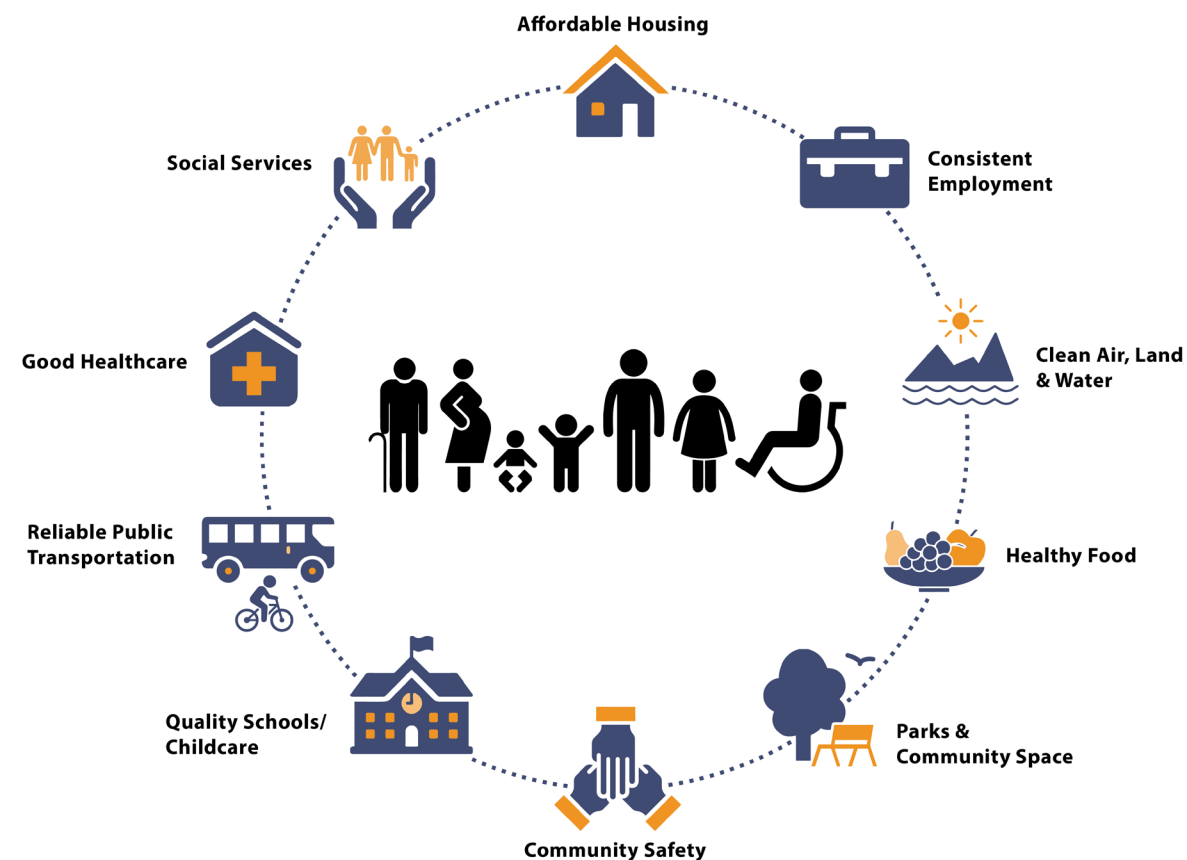
#### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TOPIC AREAS



### Civic Engagement and Investment Prioritization: Why It's Important

As the capital of California, the City of Sacramento is one of the most important places for policymaking that affects all scales of change. Everyone should have a say in decisions that affect their lives and communities. This is especially true of those communities who have historically been left out of major planning decisions. Building trust in institutions and decision-making processes, engaging directly and consistently with communities who have long been affected by environmental injustice, and prioritizing improvements in historically disinvested communities can help to build a more equal foundation for a future of opportunity.

#### A HEALTHY, EQUITABLE ENVIRONMENT



## Civic Engagement In Sacramento

Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of one's community through both political and non-political processes. Civic engagement includes both paid and unpaid forms of political activism, environmentalism, and community and national service. In the City of Sacramento, civic engagement involves everything from voting in national elections, to participating in city planning processes, to volunteering with a community organization.

Exercising one's right to vote is a critically important way to be civically engaged. However, socioeconomic barriers affect turnout: some people simply cannot afford to miss work to participate, others have language or educational barriers, and others simply don't feel represented by candidates who don't speak to issues that are important to diverse communities. People cannot advocate for and protect their communities when they are excluded from the process that generates electoral representation and public policy.

In Sacramento, areas with low voter turnout include the North Sacramento and the Fruitridge/Broadway community plan areas. Many of these areas include communities that are disproportionately affected by economic, health, and environmental burdens.

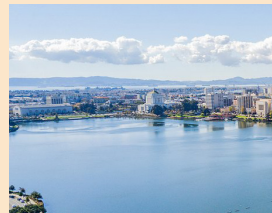
### LEVELS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	EXAMPLES OF ENGAGEMENT	DIRECTION AND PUBLIC IMPACT ON DECISION MAKING
Inform	Outreach Open Houses Data Access	One-Way, No Impact ----->
Consult	Photo Voice Community Survey Tribal Consultation	One-Way, Some Impact ----->
Involve	Design Charettes Walk Audit Focus Groups	Two-Way, Some Impact ----->
Collaborate	Citizen Advisory Committee or Workgroup	Two-Way, Good Impact ----->
Empower	The public makes final planning decisions	Two-Way, High Impact ----->

### VOTER TURNOUT, SACRAMENTO AND PEER CITIES: 2016 GENERAL ELECTION



**Sacramento**  
Population: 508,517  
Registered voters who voted:  
**68%**



**Oakland**  
Population 429,114  
Registered voters who voted:  
**70%**

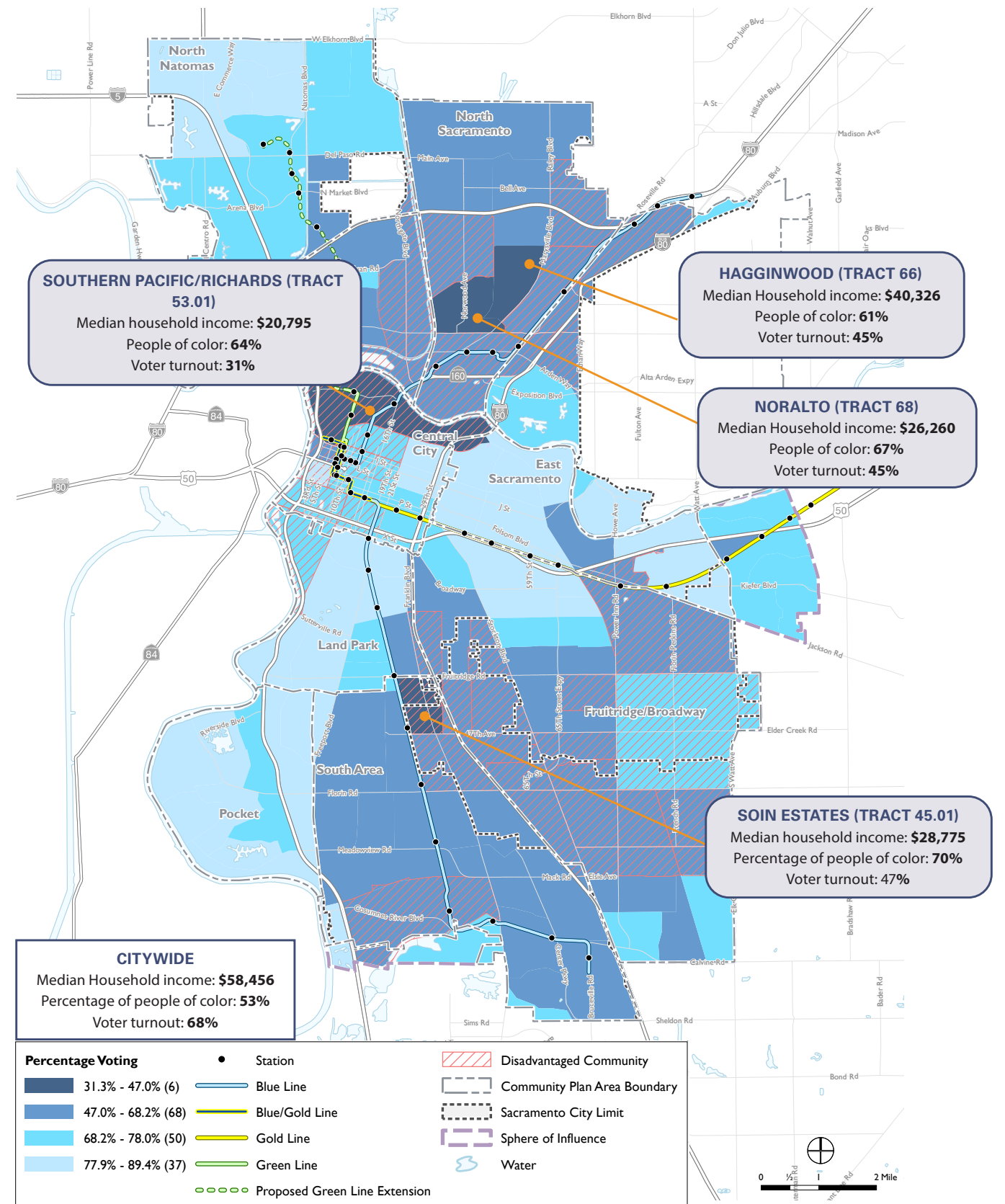


**Long Beach**  
Population: 467,353  
Registered voters who voted:  
**57%**

Source: ACS, 1-yr estimate, 2018; 2016 General Election Precinct Data, UC Berkeley, 2016.

At the local level, community engagement is an important component of environmental justice because it allows communities that have often not been included in the planning process to be engaged in the decisions that impact their health and well-being. Partnering with community-based organizations, advocacy groups, and trusted leaders that work within historically disinvested communities can aid in the development of appropriate engagement strategies and increase community participation. Collaborating with these groups as well as residents can help the City identify how and when the community would prefer to engage in public decision-making processes. The chart to the left describes different levels of community engagement and the impact that the public can have on decision making (California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, 2020).

## Voter Participation, 2016 General Election



Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018; 2016 General Election Precinct Data, UC Berkeley, 2016; CalEnviroScreen 3.0, 2018; Dyett and Bhatia, 2020.

## Linguistic Isolation

One of Sacramento's strengths is its diversity: residents come from many different cultures and backgrounds. Nearly 22 percent were born in another country, and one of six languages are spoken at home by at least one percent of the population, including Spanish; Russian; Hmong; Vietnamese; Tagalog and Chinese.

When information is not presented in a language that a person is able to communicate in or understand, it can limit their ability to be civically engaged. Adults who are not able to speak or read English well often have trouble talking to the people who provide social services and medical care, which means they may not get the health care and information they need. Linguistically isolated households may not hear or understand important information when there is an emergency like a fire, earthquake, or extreme heat waves.

An entire household's inability to communicate in English can create even more barriers to social and civic inclusion. When a household is linguistically isolated, it means that all adults speak a language other than English, and none speaks English very well.

### Linguistic Isolation Findings

1

**Linguistic Isolation.** Compared to peer cities, Sacramento ranks about the same for linguistic isolation. Some census tracts in Sacramento rank in the 90th percentile and above for linguistic isolation compared to other census tracts statewide. Meaning they have a greater degree of linguistic isolation than 90% of the census tracts in California.

2

**Areas affected.** The most linguistically isolated areas are located in the Central City, South Area, and Fruitridge/Broadway community plan areas. Much of the North Sacramento community plan area ranks in the top 50th percentile for linguistic isolation statewide.

3

**Populations affected.** Residents who are most affected by linguistic isolation are primarily from lower income tracts and are more likely to be communities of color. Many of the tracts ranking in the highest percentiles for linguistic isolation are disadvantaged communities.

### LINGUISTIC ISOLATION, 2018: SACRAMENTO AND PEER CITIES

#### Sacramento, CA



#### Oakland, CA



#### Long Beach, CA

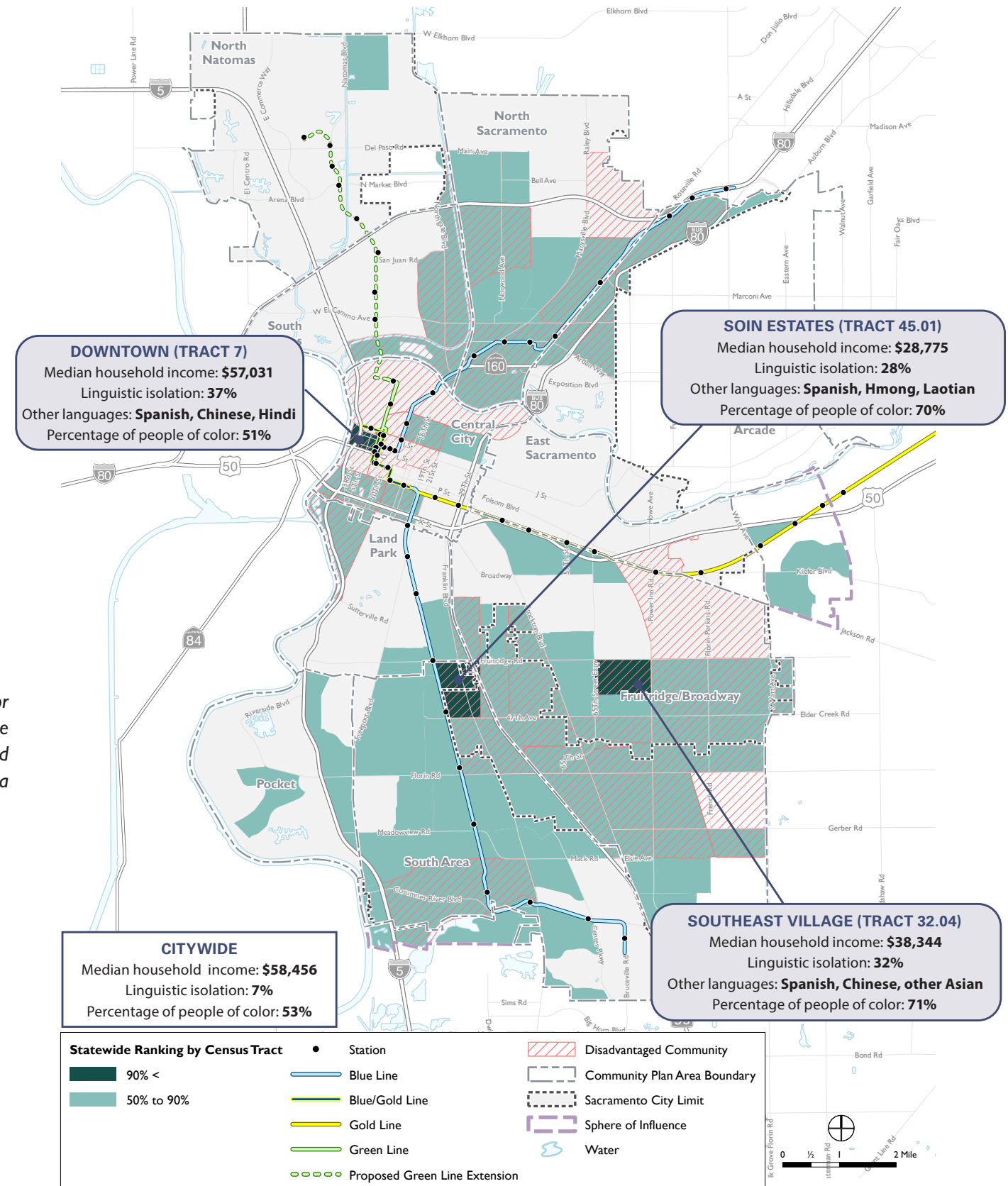


Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018

*Sacramento City 311 is a centralized call center for the City of Sacramento that is intended to make life a little easier for its residents, businesses and visitors. Over 150+ dialects are offered through a third party translation service.*

Hablamos español  
 Мы говорим по-русски  
 我們講中文  
 Peb hais lus Hmoob  
 ພວກເຮົາເວົ້າພາສາລາວ  
 Chúng tôi nói tiếng Việt

## Linguistic Isolation



Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018; CalEnviroScreen 3.0, 2018; Dyett & Bhatia, 2020.

## Internet Access

Over the past few decades, reliable access to the internet has played an increasingly important part in daily and civic life, helping people to gather and share information, access services, or stay connected to friends and family -- in many ways, internet access has become a necessity. While there are many other factors that affect one's ability to meaningfully participate in civic life such as transportation and civic education, the COVID-19 pandemic has only heightened the need for internet connectedness: school and work closures and social distancing measures implemented to slow the spread of COVID-19 require individuals to rely even more heavily on internet access to connect to health services, learn virtually, or work from home.

However, many households in Sacramento lack access to basic internet services at home. This gap, sometimes called the "digital divide", can have significant consequences for public health, children's educational achievement, and employment stability, and it can make existing inequities even worse.

## Internet Access Findings

- The Digital Divide.** While Sacramento households generally have better internet access than other peer cities in California, there are some parts of the city where more than half of households lack access to the internet.
- Areas affected.** The North Sacramento community plan area has the most tracts where more than a quarter of households do not have access to the internet. Other areas without good internet access include parts of the Central City and Fruitridge/Broadway community plan area.
- Populations affected.** Communities with no internet connection are more likely to be low-income and have higher rates of unemployment. Many tracts that have higher rates of no internet access are also disadvantaged communities.

### HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT INTERNET ACCESS, SACRAMENTO AND PEER CITIES:

 **Sacramento, CA**  
**13%**

 **Oakland, CA**  
**15%**

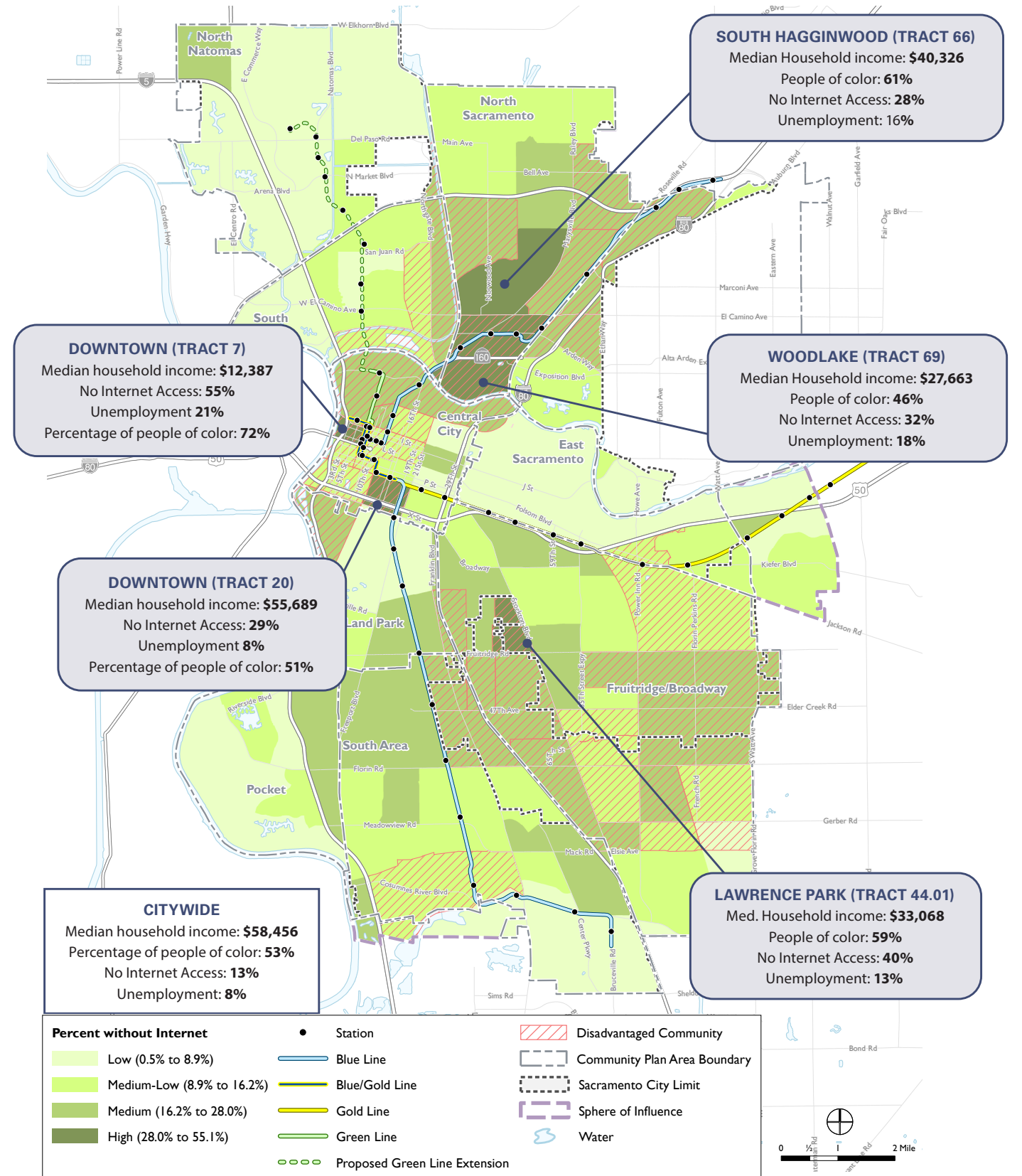
 **Long Beach, CA**  
**14%**

Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018



Sacramento's public libraries offer free internet access.

## Households Without Internet Access



Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018; City of Sacramento, 2019; Dyett & Bhatia, 2020.

## Building a Child-Centered City

Children who live in neighborhoods with quality early childhood education and schools, safe housing, access to healthy food, parks and playgrounds and clean air are more likely to grow into healthy, productive, and civically engaged adults than children who don't. Child opportunity is strongly associated with life expectancy and socioeconomic mobility.

In Sacramento, some children live in neighborhoods that provide access to these conditions—neighborhoods described as “high opportunity.” But many live in “low opportunity” neighborhoods with few or none of these conditions. The map at right shows the Child Opportunity Index (COI), a tool that measures and maps the quality of resources and conditions that matter for children to develop in a healthy way in the neighborhoods where they live. The COI combines data from 29 neighborhood-level indicators into a single measure of opportunity. While many of the indicators used overlap with those used to define disadvantaged communities, the Index also includes indicators related to quality and access to early childhood education, quality of elementary and secondary schools and social resources related to educational achievement.

These areas of low opportunity represent prime areas for community investment in neighborhood conditions and services so that all Sacramento children have an equal chance at growing up to live healthy, happy, and opportunity-filled lives.

### Child Opportunity Findings

**1 Child Opportunity.** In Sacramento, children who grow up in very low opportunity areas versus very high opportunity areas have a lower income gap when compared to peer metro areas. The life expectancy gap falls about in the middle, slightly lower than the average of a 7-year difference among the 100 largest US metro areas.

**2 Areas affected.** Areas with the lowest opportunity for children include the Fruitridge/Broadway, South Sacramento, and North Sacramento community plan areas. Areas with the highest child opportunity include North Natomas, East Sacramento, Land Park, and the Pocket.

**3 Populations affected.** Children of color and low-income children are more likely to live in areas that have very low opportunity.

### THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

The difference in earning potential and life expectancy based on where a child grew up is one way to measure opportunity. A greater difference indicates a greater degree of inequality in opportunity. In the following metro areas, the difference in a 35-year-old's average household income and life expectancy based on growing up in a very low-opportunity neighborhood versus a very high-opportunity neighborhood is:

#### San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward Metro Area

**7** LIFE EXPECTANCY DIFFERENCE  
**\$16,961** DIFFERENCE IN INCOME

#### Sacramento-Roseville-Arden Arcade Metro Area

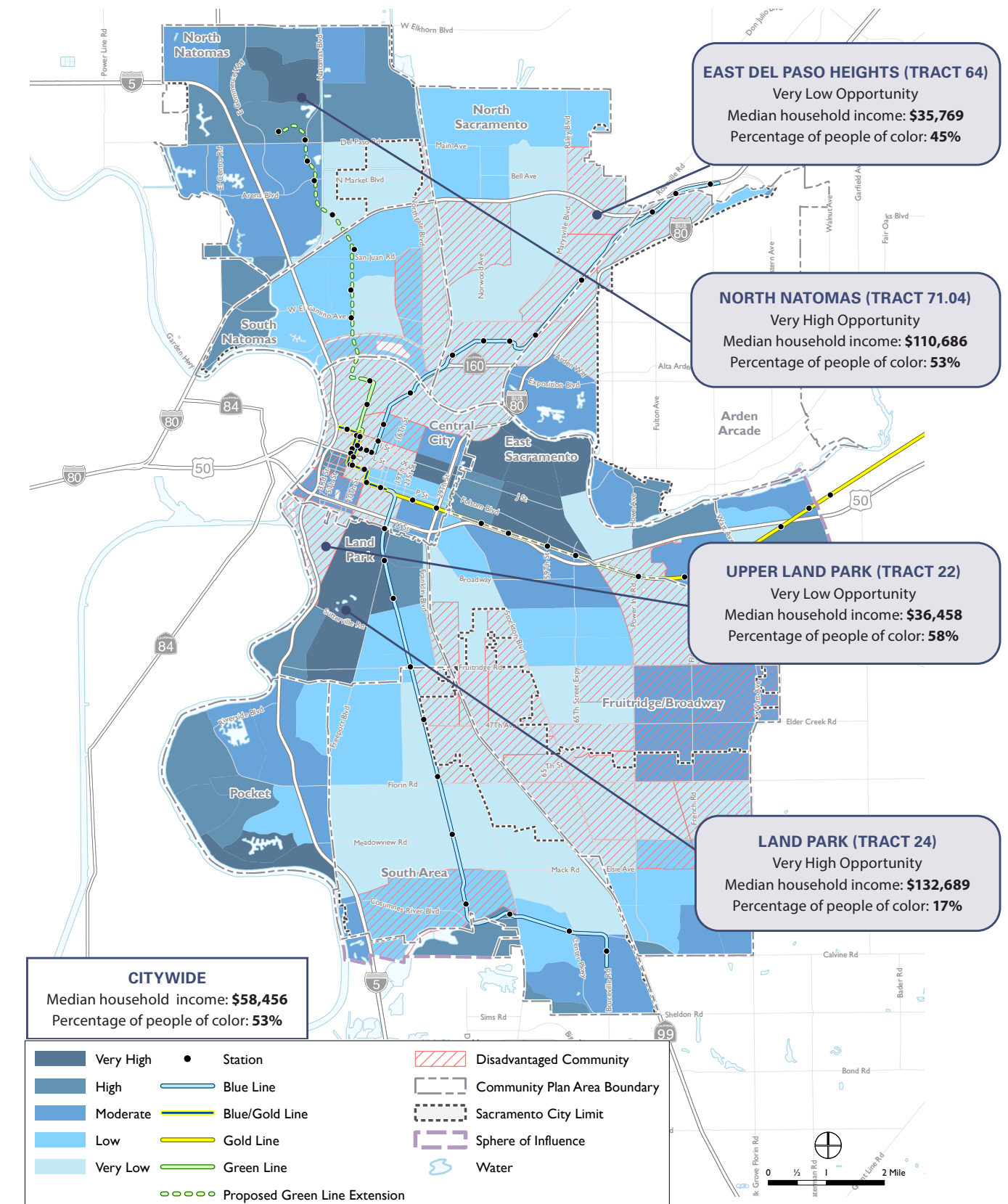
**6.3** LIFE EXPECTANCY DIFFERENCE  
**\$14,422** DIFFERENCE IN INCOME

#### Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim Metro Area

**5.3** LIFE EXPECTANCY DIFFERENCE  
**\$14,987** DIFFERENCE IN INCOME

Source: Diversitydatakids.org and the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2020

## Child Opportunity Index, Sacramento Metro Area



Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018; Diversitydatakids.org, 2020; Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2020; CalEnviroScreen, 3.0; Dyett & Bhatia, 2020.

## Race/Ethnicity and Childhood Opportunity

Every child deserves to grow up in a neighborhood that gives them a fair chance of experiencing conditions that help them thrive, no matter what their race or ethnicity. While Sacramento as a whole is relatively racially integrated, children of color are much more likely to live in neighborhoods and attend schools with fewer resources to promote healthy development than white children.

The maps to the right show where children of different racial/ethnic groups live and how that location corresponds to areas of opportunity. The more concentrated and dense the dots, the more children live in those areas. As shown:

- Greater percentages of white children live in Land Park and East Sacramento, areas of high child opportunity.
- Greater percentages of Hispanic/Latino children live in South Area, Fruitridge/Broadway, South Natomas, or North Sacramento, areas of relatively lower childhood opportunity.
- Greater percentages of Black children live in South Natomas and the Fruitridge/Broadway community plan area, areas of relatively lower opportunity.
- And greater precents of Asian/Pacific Islander children live in South Area and the Fruitridge/Broadway community plan areas, areas of relatively lower childhood opportunity.
- Pocket and parts of North Natomas community plan areas represent areas of higher opportunity for children of all races.

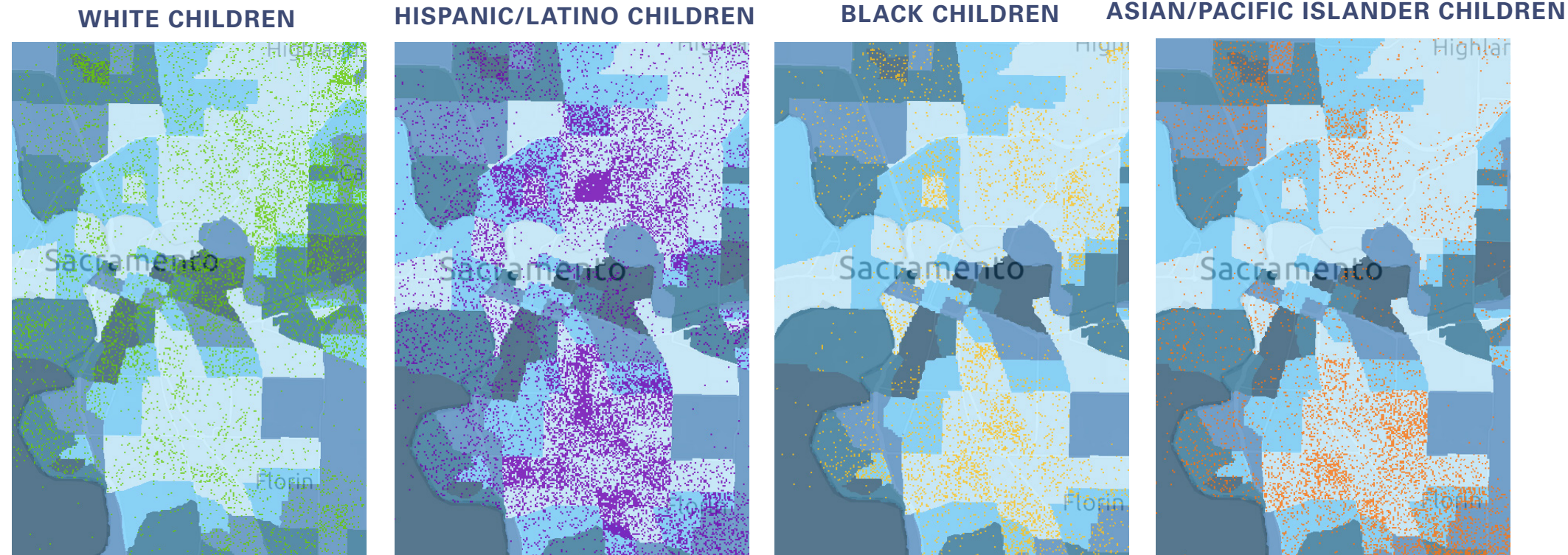
### History: Structural Racism and Access to Opportunity

Frank discussions about race are an essential part of advancing environmental justice and ensuring all children have equitable access to opportunity. Racism has been pervasively and deeply embedded in the US's institutions and systems since its founding, including within government, education, the economy, healthcare, criminal justice, and other systems that shape American society.

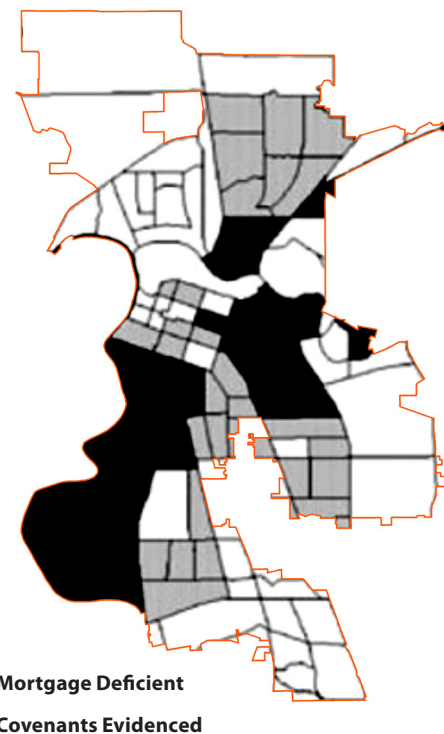
As the Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) describes:

*"Many current inequities are sustained by historical legacies and structures and systems that repeat patterns of exclusion. Consider how schools are funded and the relationship of racial and economic segregation in housing. Systems and structures create and perpetuate resource and opportunity gaps that show up as achievement gaps. Clearly, we have not achieved a "post-racial" society... Taking a "color-blind" approach simply allows racial inequities to continue."*

Structural racism affects children's opportunity. The map to the right shows where historic racially restrictive covenants in Sacramento explicitly barred residents of color from buying homes, and those tracts where mortgage deficiency was common. This practice, along with other policies, shaped and continue to shape the geography of opportunity, such as opportunities for a family to build wealth, participate in decisions, get a better education, and access healthy food and green space. For children in Sacramento, these inequities in neighborhood conditions result in very different outcomes and life trajectories.



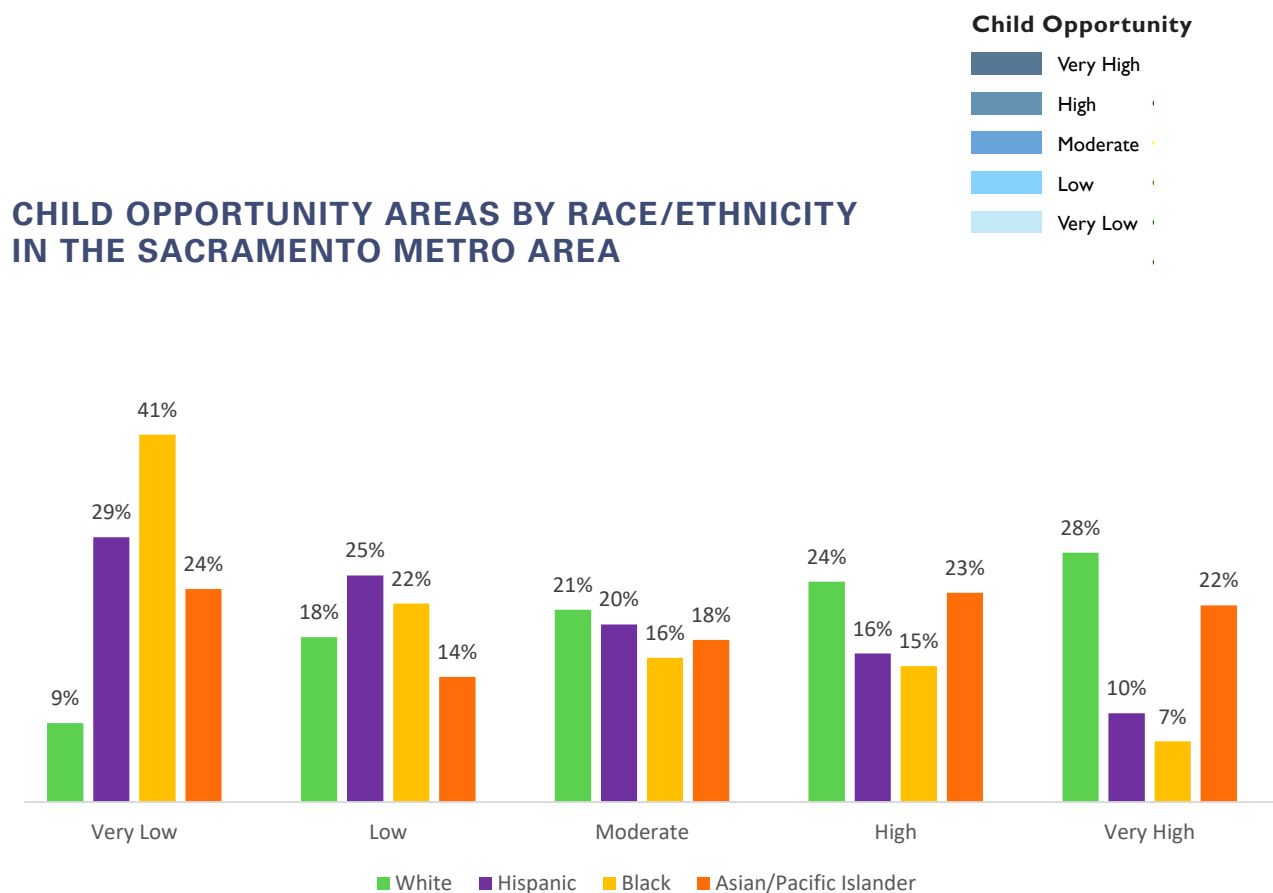
Source: Diversitydatakids.org, 2020; Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity



Mortgage Deficient  
 Covenants Evidenced

Source: J. Hernandez. (2009). Redlining Revisited: Mortgage Lending Patterns in Sacramento 1930-2004. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. 33. 291-313; Government Alliance on Race & Equity, "Why Government."

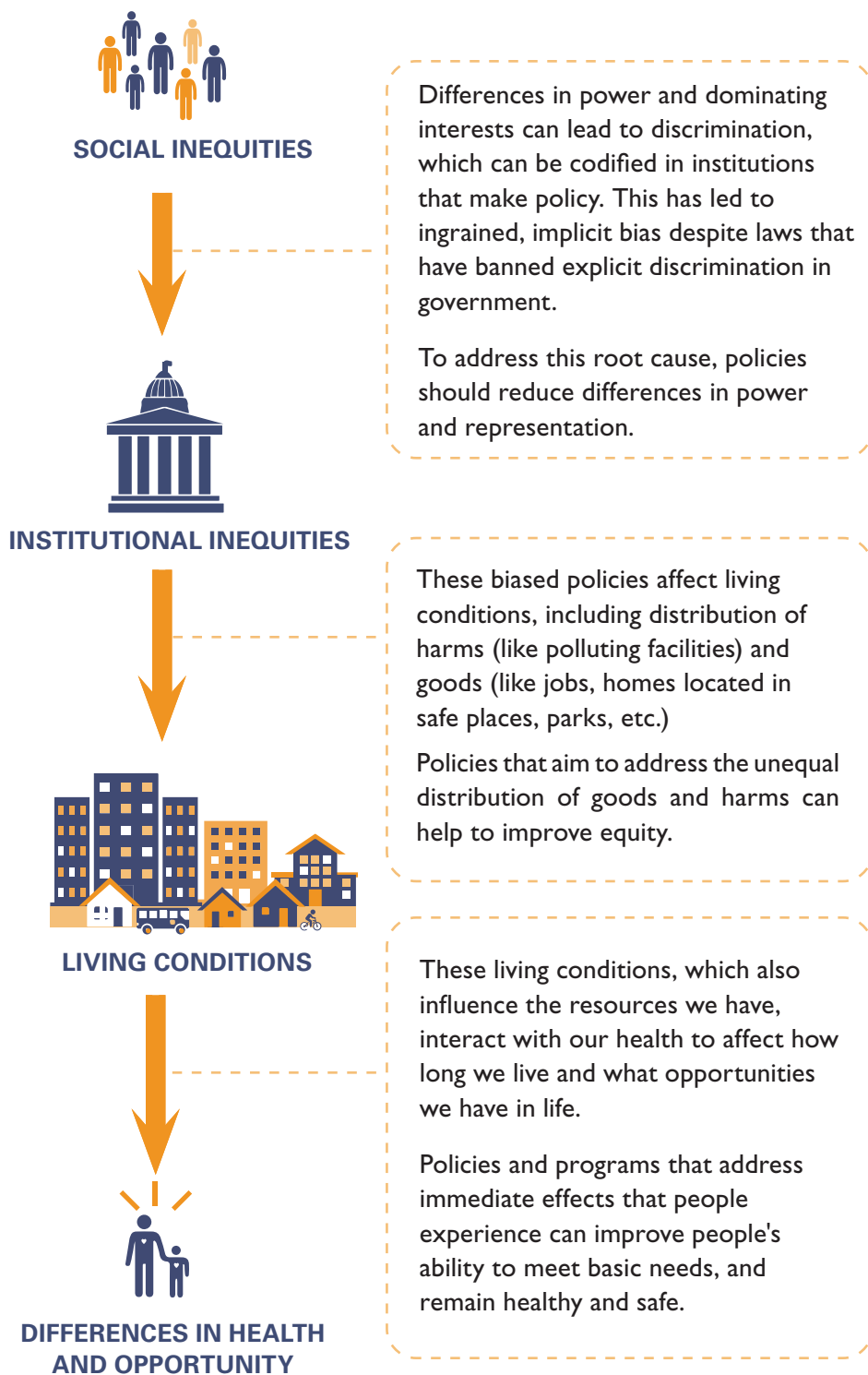
### CHILD OPPORTUNITY AREAS BY RACE/ETHNICITY IN THE SACRAMENTO METRO AREA



Source: Diversitydatakids.org, 2020; Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

## Strategies

### Root Causes Of Environmental Injustice



*Adapted from BARHII's Public Health Framework for Reducing Health Inequities Framework.*

### Civic Engagement and Investment Prioritization Issues

**1 Voter Participation and Local Engagement.** Sixty eight percent of Sacramento's voting population participated in the 2016 election. Understanding and removing barriers to participation both in national and local decisionmaking can increase civic engagement among all groups.

**2 Accessing Information.** Some of the barriers to civic participation include linguistic isolation and lack of internet access. High rates of linguistic isolation exist in parts of the Fruitridge/Broadway and South Sacramento community plan areas and disproportionately affects people of color. Lack of internet access disproportionately occurs in the North Sacramento community plan area and affects lower income and unemployed residents.

**3 Child Opportunity.** Children who live in neighborhoods with high levels of opportunity-- quality early childhood education and schools, safe housing, access to healthy food, parks and playgrounds and clean air-- are more likely to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives. Children of color are more likely to live in areas of lower opportunity than their white peers. Understanding geographic patterns of opportunity for children can help prioritize investments in conditions that allow all children to thrive.

### Existing/Ongoing City Efforts

- 1**
  - The Community Engagement Division, which aims to bridge and engage Sacramento's diverse residents with resources to maintain, revitalize, and promote healthy communities, as well as to facilitate dialogue and create collaboration opportunities among community members and City departments and officials.
  - Creation of the Office of Diversity & Equity, which works to build diversity, equity, and inclusion capacity of City staff and infrastructure.
  - Provision of a municipal election webpage.
- 2**
  - Existing goals and policies to improve communication with the community, including recent expansion of languages to non-emergency phone lines. This represents efforts to improve participation processes, and prioritization; as well as services, partnerships, and programs.
  - Provision of free public Wi-Fi at 27 public parks and at several Sacramento community Centers.
- 3**
  - Policies that provide equitable distribution of educational facilities and funding for development of new parks and community/recreation facilities.
  - The Citywide Youth Development Campaign Plan's mission is to provide systemic and sustainable investments and opportunities, harnessing collective assets to champion intentional and equitable pathways for young people to succeed.
  - Launch of the Inclusive Economic Development Initiative, which includes a Neighborhood Development Action Team (NDAT). NDAT will help facilitate equitable investments from the City.



# Civic Engagement and Investment Prioritization: What is Needed

ADD YOUR IDEAS TO THE BOXES BELOW AND ON THE BACK OF THIS FACTBOOK.

## 1 Improve civic engagement processes with the public.

*Ensure that all City public participatory processes are accessible to City residents, including minority and non-English speaking members of our community; Educate decision makers and the general public on environmental justice issues and advance opportunities to participate in decision-making processes for residents and community organizations.*

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## 2 Coordinate and raise awareness among City departments.

*Example policies could include: Ensure that future development and improvements account for environmental justice issues and minimize any health and environmental impacts on residents, particularly low-income communities.*

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## 3 Prioritize disadvantaged communities.

*Example policies could include: Work with other public agencies and entities to support environmental justice programs and reinvest public capital in our underserved communities.*

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**ADDITIONAL IDEAS OR ISSUES:**